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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 000636

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR JROSHOLT, K WILLIAMS; DS COMMAND CENTER  
AND DS/IP/WHA; INR/IAA; SOUTHCOM FOR J5; SECDEF FOR OSD CAR  
DESK; EMBASSIES FOR POL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2017

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [NS](#)

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT OF SURINAME AND OPPOSITION TRADE  
ACCUSATIONS IN MEDIA. DUTCH CONCERNED BY INTEL

Classified By: Charge d' Affaires, a.i. Thomas R. Genton for reason 1.4  
(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. "At very short notice, violent confrontations can be expected in Suriname," Dutch Embassy interlocutors relayed to EmbOffs during a late evening meeting at the Dutch Embassy on December 6. This information was from a "reliable source," the Dutch DCM said, who had also indicated "foreign embassies and/or residences may be targeted." Post convened the Emergency Action Committee (EAC) in response, which determined this is likely another move in the very public media/public opinion war between the Government of Suriname and the leaders of the National Democratic Party. In the absence of corroborating information at this time, the security situation did not warrant any further measures, the EAC decided. End Summary.

¶2. (C) EmbOffs were contacted by Dutch Embassy officials on December 6 and asked to attend a 10:00 PM meeting at the Dutch Embassy. Charge, DEA Country Attache, and TDY ORA Contractor attended for the U.S. Embassy.

¶3. (C) During the meeting, the Dutch DCM read a translation of information "received from a reliable source" that stated the following: "Today, 6th December 2007, panic has arisen among the group close to Bouterse, including his personal security staff. They are mobilising and arming themselves. At very short notice, violent confrontations can be expected in Suriname. Foreign Embassies and/or residences may also be targeted."

¶4. (SBU) The Government of Suriname (GOS) and the opposition party (NDP) of Desi Bouterse, who is on trial with 24 others for the December 8, 1982, murders of 15 political opponents, have been trading highly incendiary accusations in local media -- both print and television -- during the past week. Minister of Justice and Police Chandrikapersad Santokhi accused the opposition of planning and undertaking actions to undermine not just the trial, but the GOS. On December 6, NDP spokesman Rashied Doekhi accused the GOS and Dutch of plotting to assassinate Bouterse. Carried on the first page of De Ware Tijd, Suriname's top circulation daily, were NDP claims that the GOS had several scenarios through which to assassinate Bouterse, and that the NDP had convened a special session in order to take proper measures to protect their chairman. The article reported the NDP "claims they have hard information that joint Surinamese and Dutch troops started the hunt for Desi Bouterse." The article also noted,

however, that Surinamese Vice President Ramdien Sardjoe and Dutch Embassy spokesperson Ralf van de Beek had both publicly denounced the accusations.

15. (C) One EmbOff was in Nickerie District on December 6, and reported that Bouterse, who owns a home there, was present and appearing in public in Nickerie. The police station showed no unusual activity. Press contacts of the Embassy told us that five or six buses of Surinamese military personnel had been seen in Nickerie -- but these buses are likely associated with the new military base at Clara Poleer and not any Bouterse hunt. The "man on the street" in Nickerie informed EmbOff that these accusations could be setting the stage for Bouterse to flee the country -- so that he could be seen by NDP supporters as fleeing for his safety rather than to avoid being arrested.

16. (C) Comment. Post convened the Emergency Action Committee on Friday afternoon, December 7 at 3:20 pm. In the absence of any new or corroborating information, and taking into account the political machinations of the GOS and the NDP, the EAC determined that the security situation did not warrant further measures; however, the RSO has increased patrols and surveillance of USG facilities and residences. Employees were instructed to inform the RSO of any travel outside of Paramaribo city limits. RSO and EmbOffs will continue to monitor the situation. End Comment.  
GENTON